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Summary record of the 16th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 14 October 2016, at 3 p.m.

Chair:	Ms. Mejía Vélez	(Colombia)
later:	Mr. Eriza (Vice-Chair)	(Indonesia)
later:	Ms. Mejía Vélez (Chair)	(Colombia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Organization of work

1. **The Chair** proposed that the Committee should decide to invite the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea to present an oral update to the Third Committee as a member of the former commission of inquiry on human rights in Eritrea. The Special Rapporteur would be orally introduced as a member of the former commission, and additional time would be allocated if needed.

2. **The Chair** asked if the Committee wished to adopt her proposal.

3. *It was so decided.*

4. **Mr. Idris** (Eritrea) commended the Chair and the other members of the Bureau for their skilful steering of the Committee's work. The secretariat of the Third Committee was likewise to be commended for its professionalism. His delegation would continue to support their efforts to ensure a successful session and had accepted the Chair's proposal in the interests of moving forward.

5. From the outset, Eritrea's concern had been to clarify not whether a commission whose mandate had been terminated could be represented before the Committee but whether the General Assembly could invite a different body. It had made every effort to resolve the matter within the African Group, as it primarily concerned three African delegations, but the other side had refused to engage within the African house. The two-week discussion clearly demonstrated how the issue of human rights had become politicized. The discussion had been driven not by concern for procedure or human rights but by the desire to escalate bilateral hostilities and embroil the Committee in them. Countries with a long history of contempt for international law, including a country guilty of atrocious human rights violations that refused to allow an independent international investigation, were presenting themselves as the custodians of the General Assembly's rules of procedure. Human rights should not be politicized and could be promoted only through genuine dialogue and constructive engagement.

Agenda item 64: Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*) (A/71/41)

(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*) (A/71/97, A/71/205, A/71/206, A/71/213, A/71/253, A/71/261, A/71/277 and A/71/413)

(b) Follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children (*continued*) (A/71/175)

6. **Mr. Yaremenko** (Ukraine) said that his country had domesticated the numerous United Nations conventions on child protection, with special attention to its obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In September it had ratified the third Optional Protocol to that Convention, noting at the time that the temporary occupation of part of its territory limited its ability to fulfil its obligations there. It had implemented the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on its consolidated third and fourth periodic report and was currently carrying out an annual national action plan that included streamlining its accounting system for abandoned, homeless and other children. In recent years, it had focused on preventing child abandonment, providing support for families in difficult situations and ensuring that children deprived of parental care could care to grow up in a family environment.

7. As a result of Russian aggression, the number of families in difficult situations had skyrocketed. Since the beginning of the Russian-masterminded conflict, more than 250 children had been killed or wounded in eastern Ukraine, and more than 215,000 children had been forced to leave their homes. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the lives of the approximately 580,000 children living in non-Ukrainian controlled areas and along the line of contact were severely affected by the conflict. His Government was doing its utmost to strengthen social protection for displaced families and their children and appealed for greater attention to conflict-related violations of children's rights in the Donbas region.

8. The growth of civil society activity in Ukraine raised the issue of building long-term partnerships between non-governmental organizations, business and government. There was also a need for increased international assistance to overcome the legacy of the Chernobyl disaster, which had primarily affected children. Ukraine highly appreciated the financial and technical assistance provided by UNICEF and its partners.

9. **Ms. Abushawesh** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that Palestinian children were denied their most basic human rights as a result of brutal military occupation. Moreover, the occupying Power was escalating its attacks on the entire Palestinian civilian population. It had stepped up its illegal, punitive demolition of Palestinian homes, farm fields and schools. Children in the Gaza Strip continued to suffer under the illegal and inhumane blockade. In June, the occupying forces had "mistakenly" shot yet another innocent Palestinian child, but given their number, such "mistakes" would appear to be a matter of deliberate policy. Her delegation also wanted to place on record the crimes committed by violent Israeli settlers under the watch and protection of the occupying forces.

10. The State of Palestine once again called on the international community to compel Israel to lift the blockade and to cease its violence against Palestinian children and their families, as well as to hold Israel and the illegal Israeli settlers accountable for their crimes.

11. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (El Salvador) said that his country had made significant progress in children's education, health and protection and had strengthened its legislative and policy framework to fully protect the rights of children and adolescents, who represented a third of its population. Between June 2014 and May 2015, a total of 15,186 cases of alleged threats or violations had been brought before the 15 child and adolescent protection boards established to protect children's rights at the local level. His Government recognized that inequalities remained and reaffirmed its commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda.

12. The approach to the complex issue of child and adolescent migrants entering the United States from Central America should be based on human rights and the best interests of the child, rather than detention and deportation. The countries of origin, transit and destination should work together to ensure respect for children's rights, including in particular their rights to be reunited with their families and not to be discriminated against on the basis of their immigration status.

13. His Government had ratified the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in February 2015.

14. **Mr. Otto** (Palau) said that his country would be paying greater attention to creating an environment in which parents invested time, love and resources in their children and children were safe from demeaning activities and bullying. By focusing on the mental well-being of its children, it hoped to harness the creativity of children and youth as agents of change, as envisioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

15. **Mr. Neow Choo Seong** (Malaysia) said that, since acceding to the Convention in 1995, Malaysia had established numerous laws and policies to protect children from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, beginning with the Child Act 2001. It recognized the need for a revitalized global partnership on children, and it valued its partnership with UNICEF. As a current member of the Security Council and Chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, Malaysia was deeply committed to breaking the cycle of impunity for violations of children's rights in armed conflict, and it urged Member States, the United Nations system and civil society to work together to develop and institute strong accountability mechanisms.

16. **Mr. Tchalare** (Togo) said that, in its ongoing efforts to promote and protect the rights of children, Togo had recently enacted several laws implementing the Child Code and had adopted a report on the national child protection system. It provided training on HIV/AIDS prevention, care of disabled children and provision of psychosocial support for children in emergency situations, and it continued to make gains in school enrolment from the preschool through secondary school levels, including in vocational and technical programmes. Regionally, Togo, Benin and Nigeria had drafted a tripartite agreement on the protection of children on the move and child victims of trafficking.

17. However, persistent shortcomings pointed to the need for continued effort. For example, only 28 per cent of girls finished lower secondary school, compared with 51 per cent of boys, and rural children were three times less likely to finish secondary school than urban children.

18. In the context of South-South cooperation, it was vital for developing countries, especially African countries, to find innovative mechanisms for funding

public programmes on children. All development actors must take ownership of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

19. **Ms. Rahimova** (Azerbaijan) said that her delegation was heartened by the recent reinforcement of global commitments to protect children against violence, including in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Azerbaijan appreciated the growing attention to the topic of children in armed conflict, the signing of the various actions plans and the release of child soldiers, but it was also alarmed at emerging, more complex challenges, including the impact of violent extremism on children through the Internet and social media. Furthermore, there had been a significant rise in grave violations of the rights of children in situations of armed conflict. Internally displaced children were as vulnerable as refugee children, and children affected by armed conflict should be given special attention in implementing SDGs.

20. Azerbaijan had strengthened its public protections for children through the work of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs and by ratifying numerous international instruments, enacting solid legislation and implementing State programmes. It had also developed effective cooperation with UNICEF. Unfortunately, Azerbaijani children were still being killed, injured and displaced by Armenian attacks on its territory. For the children's sake, priority should be given to resolving all conflicts across the globe in accordance with international law.

21. **Mr. Gumende** (Mozambique) said that, over the past 40 years, her country had enacted numerous laws, built institutions and worked at the community level to address the challenges confronting Mozambican children. Most recently, it had adopted a national strategy to combat early and forced marriages, and it was currently implementing the National Plan of Action for Children (2013-2019). As a result of its cumulative efforts, more children had access to education and improved nutrition, the Child Parliament had been strengthened, health-care facilities were more numerous, access to water and sanitation had improved and the social security programme covered a larger number of vulnerable families. His Government believed in an integrated approach combining the efforts of the public, private and civil society sectors and was grateful for the partnership and cooperation of the various United Nations entities, including UNICEF.

22. Mozambique's efforts were constrained by vulnerability to climate change and insufficient institutional capacity. In addition, it continued to grapple with high rates of malaria and HIV/AIDS.

23. **Ms. Grigoryan** (Armenia) said that children's rights could be protected and promoted through evidence-based advocacy for stronger national laws and policies incorporating the rights and needs of children. Armenia was implementing a number of measures that would benefit children, including a development strategy, a national educational development programme and a national programme for the protection of children's rights. It wished to highlight its growing collaboration with development partners, in particular, UNICEF. The UNICEF country programme document for Armenia for 2016-2020 addressed the issues of children facing multiple deprivations and focused on integrated health, social protection and inclusive education reforms.

24. In April, Azerbaijan had intentionally bombarded Armenian civilian infrastructure, including a primary school, and Azerbaijani soldiers had attacked, tortured, killed, and mutilated civilians — barbaric acts that were in clear violation of the core international instruments. A mechanism to investigate the ceasefire violations should be established in order to prevent their recurrence and end impunity.

25. **Ms. Goliatha** (Central African Republic) said that her Government remained committed to promoting and protecting the rights of children. However, the civil war in the Central African Republic had killed, maimed and orphaned children. They had been recruited into armed groups and driven from their homes; they had gone without food or medical care and suffered sexual abuse and rape, even at the hands of international peacekeepers, as confirmed most recently by the Secretary-General's report on combating sexual exploitation and abuse (A/71/97).

26. In the midst of it all, certain non-governmental organizations were providing classes for internally displaced children. Those children should be given the opportunity to return home, in the hope that Security Council resolution 2121 (2013) on the situation in the

Central African Republic would be implemented and prove effective. During 2014-2015, her Government and UNICEF had successfully collaborated to obtain the release of more than 5,000 child soldiers.

27. **Mr. Yao** Shaojun (China) said that, in accordance with the Convention and the relevant Optional Protocols, his Government was working to improve its legal and child welfare systems and promote equity in education. Social consensus had grown around the principle of "children first". The child development programme 2011-2020 had made significant strides in preschool education. Some provinces had established free education from preschool through secondary school, while others had established special safeguards for children in vulnerable situations.

28. States should endeavour to implement the child-related targets of the 2030 Agenda effectively and should support the United Nations system and civil society in their related efforts. Developed countries should increase financial and technical assistance to help developing countries protect the rights of children, and developing countries should share their experiences. As announced at the Global Leaders Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in 2015, China was implementing 100 projects to provide financial aid to girls living in poverty in order to increase their school enrolment. It would continue to work with the rest of the international community to achieve a world fit for children.

29. **Mr. Shava** (Zimbabwe) said that his country remained fully committed to the 2030 Agenda and its overarching goal of eradicating poverty. For countries such as his, the promotion of the rights of children could not be viewed in isolation from their broader development goals. Zimbabwe recognized the importance of sustained investment in its children. Because children did best in a secure family environment, it provided numerous forms of assistance to families.

30. Zimbabwe had several laws with provisions relating specifically to the protection of children, and his Government was in the process of aligning its legislation with treaty obligations. It had also drafted a child rights policy. With regard to the sexual abuse of children, Zimbabwe had established a victim-friendly system for child survivors of sexual abuse and a protocol on the multisectoral management of sexual abuse and violence. To combat child marriages, it had recently passed a law setting the legal age of marriage at 18, and it stood ready to work with all local, regional, and international partners to translate that law into tangible protection. In education, it had launched a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) initiative to better prepare its children for future challenges.

31. **Ms. Gueye** (Senegal) said that her delegation reiterated its support for the "Children Not Soldiers" campaign, which had brought about the release of more than 115,000 child soldiers since 2000. In view of the attacks on schools and hospitals, the international community urgently needed to take steps to protect schools, hospitals and medical personnel.

32. Senegal gave due attention to children's rights in budget allocations for education, health, social welfare and the family. Much progress had been made, especially in education, where it had achieved a primary school enrolment rate of 80 per cent and near parity for girls and boys. Since 2005, it had been able to eradicate female genital mutilation in 1,600 villages through an extensive public awareness campaign. It had implemented universal health coverage, and had boosted the birth registration rate to 80 per cent.

33. **Mr. Von Hoft** (Angola) said that, in implementing the 2030 Agenda and the General Assembly Declaration and Plan of Action on a world fit for children (A/RES/S-27/2), Angola continued to focus on children in policymaking and budgeting. It had increased the budget share for projects and programmes to ensure the well-being of children and had enacted laws to protect vulnerable children such as children with disabilities. As a party to the Convention and its first two Optional Protocols, Angola had presented its consolidated second, third and fourth periodic reports and was finalizing its combined fifth and sixth report.

34. **Ms. Betham-Malielegaoi** (Samoa) said that, in Samoan culture, the family and community had primary responsibility for child-rearing, as stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2002 provided for the registration of all births, even retroactively. With regard to child labour, the Labour and Employment Relations Act 2013 established

conditions for the employment of children, and basic strategies were being developed to address the issue of child vendors, especially those working during school hours. Children under 5 received free primary health care, including vaccinations, and visiting medical practitioners and mobile clinics provided health care in rural areas and in the home. After making education compulsory in 2009, Samoa had instituted a school fees grant scheme that effectively made the first eleven years of school free. It supported quality education for all, including disabled and poor children.

35. **Ms. Deer** (Observer for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)), emphasizing the need to establish early identification and referral mechanisms for the most vulnerable migrants, said that migrant children were particularly vulnerable. A child whose age could not be documented should nevertheless be protected as a child. Migrant children could inadvertently become separated from their families, and they were sometimes purposely separated from them by well-meaning authorities, possibly causing great distress. States were obligated under international law to prevent family separation, preserve family unity and help families determine the whereabouts or fate of missing relatives. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement worked to locate family members when children so desired, but not if they were afraid that finding them might undermine their asylum claim. Thus, while States should act to facilitate swift family reunification when it served the best interests of the child, they should refrain from doing so when it did not.

36. ICRC engaged in confidential dialogue with States to ensure that they fulfilled their obligations to migrant children. It was in the best interests of migrant children to detain them only as a last resort and then only for the shortest time possible. Furthermore, when a State was planning to return migrants, it must carefully assess each situation and respect the principle of non-refoulement.

37. By adopting the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, the General Assembly had set forth the commitment to treat every individual with humanity. She called on Member States to provide adequate safeguards to protect the safety and dignity of migrant children and to ensure their access to essential services.

38. *Mr. Eriza (Indonesia), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

39. **Mr. Espiritu** (Observer for the Sovereign Order of Malta), noting the persistently high rate of child mortality, said that the Order continued to provide prenatal, maternal and neonatal care across the globe. Its Bethlehem hospital delivered 70 per cent of all babies in the district, regardless of family nationality, religion or income. It operated a maternity and neonatal ward in Madagascar, was building centres in Togo and Uganda and would soon open a unit in the United Republic of Tanzania for Burundian refugee mothers. It was also actively engaged in combating maternal and child malnutrition across Africa and Asia.

40. The Order was strengthening its humanitarian aid actions to confront the tragic rise in the number of displaced children. Working with the Italian coastguard in the Strait of Sicily, its doctors had delivered three babies at sea the previous week. It supported medical facilities in the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq, Lebanon and Turkey that had treated 5,000 children in the Syrian Arab Republic alone in 2015. Outside the Middle East, it provided medical and humanitarian assistance to refugees in Germany, Hungary, Ukraine, South Sudan, Myanmar and elsewhere in accordance with its 900-year-old mission of caring for the sick and vulnerable.

41. **Ms. Giordano** (Observer for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)) said that, according to a recent UNICEF report, there were nearly 50 million migrant, refugee and displaced children. Increasingly, those children were travelling alone. Children on the move were among the most vulnerable categories; they could also be the most invisible and least likely to have a chance to voice their needs. While systems for protecting children from violence were receiving more attention, too many significant gaps remained. One was the lack of age- and gender-disaggregated data, which was necessary to address children's needs in a coordinated, rigorous manner. In that connection, early identification of at-risk children was vital to prevent them from being trafficked or exploited and provide them with the assistance they needed. States should be uncompromising in protecting children on the move. They should do much more to maintain family unity, should make family tracing a priority and should

provide interim alternative care arrangements, always bearing in mind the best interests of the child.

42. IFRC would continue to respond to the needs of children worldwide by establishing safe spaces, reuniting families, providing educational support, raising awareness of children's protection needs and providing psychosocial, health, water, sanitation and hygiene services.

43. *Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia), Chair, resumed the Chair.*

44. **Mr. Carvalho Pinheiro** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that the Fourth Global Conference on Child Labour, for which ILO was providing technical input, would help to boost and broaden support for activities to protect children. ILO continued to develop, enhance and monitor child-related international labour norms such as the Minimum Age Convention, the Forced Labour Convention and its Protocol and Recommendation, and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention. The ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation was also important, given the key role of social floors in attenuating inequalities that adversely affected children. The ILO Transition from the Informal Economy Recommendation addressed a segment of the economy that was disproportionately responsible for violations of human, labour and children's rights. Under its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, ILO provided technical assistance, improved the knowledge base and supported the worldwide movement against child labour. Together with several United Nations agencies and special procedures mandate holders, it had just launched SDG Alliance 8.7 on ending forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and the worst forms of child labour. Lastly, as part of its efforts to improve data collection and statistics, it had begun work on updating global estimates on child labour, henceforth to be disaggregated by region, sex, age group, sector and labour type.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

45. **Mr. Barkan** (Israel) said that, instead of promoting the Committee's agenda, the Palestinian representative had devoted her statement to baseless accusations that sent a message of hate and incitement. The Israeli delegation refused to play those games. Her accusations did not bring the world closer to resolving the core challenges facing their region; they only further delayed the peaceful future that Palestinian and Israeli children deserved.

46. **Ms. Sukacheva** (Russian Federation), responding to the statement made by the representative of Georgia at the previous meeting, said that the Georgian authorities should address their concerns about children in the sovereign States of Abkhazia and South Ossetia directly to the authorities of those countries. Replying to the representative of Ukraine, he once again reminded the Ukrainian delegation that Crimea had been annexed in full compliance with international law. Since then, far from violating the human rights of the people, the Russian Federation had substantially improved their lives; the real human rights violations in Crimea were the blockades imposed by Ukrainian and Tartar nationalists with the full support of Ukraine. The Ukrainian representative was merely attempting to deflect international attention from Ukraine's human rights violations: the bombings of its own people in Donbas, the abduction and torture of journalists and opposition leaders, and the slaughter of protesters in Kyiv, for example. Ukraine should focus on investigating those crimes and on fulfilling its human rights commitments in western Ukraine. It should also give attention to implementing the Minsk Agreements . Unfortunately, more heavy artillery had recently been seen moving into the conflict area.

47. Once again, the other delegations were relying on social media for news about the Syrian Arab Republic rather than on the Russian Federation's daily reports. They did not want to face the fact that terrorists and non-State actors had mined the humanitarian corridor and were hiding weapons and posting snipers in schools and hospitals. Children were being used as human shields.

48. **Mr. Mikayilli** (Azerbaijan) said that the Armenian representative's accusations had no place in a discussion of children's rights. She was unsuccessfully trying to shift the blame for the April clashes onto Azerbaijan. Azerbaijani territories were under occupation, as repeatedly affirmed in Security Council and General Assembly resolutions demanding the unconditional withdrawal of Armenian forces. To compound the problem, Armenia had changed the demographic composition of the territories by

conducting ethnic cleansing, expelling Azerbaijanis and resettling Syrian Armenians there. In the recent hostilities, Azerbaijan had simply been defending its country and protecting its people. Armenia's troops should never have been in Azerbaijani territory, and that country was continuing its military build-up. If Armenia were really interested in peace, it would withdraw its troops from the occupied territories.

49. **Ms. Grigoryan** (Armenia) said that her delegation rejected the ungrounded but familiar accusations of the representative of Azerbaijan. His position confirmed that Azerbaijan's final solution to the conflict was the extermination of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. The most recent military aggression had claimed the lives of nearly 100 people, including civilians, and had been accompanied by acts of despicable barbarism condoned by the Government of Azerbaijan and celebrated by its people. Azerbaijan's rationale for denying the people of Nagorno-Karabakh their right to self-determination was flawed, unsustainable and inhuman. The only sustainable solution to the conflict was a peaceful solution mediated by the Minsk Group. To demonstrate its commitment to peaceful settlement, Azerbaijan should, as a first step, immediately and unconditionally implement the agreements reached in Vienna and St. Petersburg in May and June. Its refusal to do so rendered it fully responsible for the lack of progress.

50. **Ms. Abushawesh** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that the Israeli representative's predictable comments were completely false, as they overlooked the context of Israel's 50-year military occupation of the State of Palestine and its blatant violations of international and human rights law. Contrary to his assertion, the right to self-determination was central to the Committee's agenda.

51. The Palestinian statement stood on its own merits and had actually understated the stark, bitter reality of the lives of Palestinian children under occupation. The many gross violations of their rights were well documented by organs of the United Nations system and countless human rights organizations, including some Israeli ones.

52. In the typical racist manner of an occupying Power, the Israeli delegation was attempting to dehumanize the Palestinian people. Palestinian parents did not incite their children to violence or encourage them to place themselves in harm's way. It was Israel that was harming the children, by arresting, injuring and killing them, demolishing their homes and denying them their rights to education, health, food, clean water and development.

53. The Palestinian delegation would continue to condemn the killing of all children and called on the Israeli delegation to do the same. Israeli and Palestinian children would not live in peace until Israel ended its occupation and ceased to violate Palestinian rights.

54. **Mr. Yaremenko** (Ukraine) said that he apparently needed to update the members of the Russian delegation on events in the Crimean peninsula. They should watch the Russian documentary "Crimea: the Road to the Motherland", in which their President clearly said that he had sent military intelligence and special forces into Crimea and had been prepared to use nuclear force. In his December press conference, he had once again admitted that there were Russians "solving military issues" in Crimea. Furthermore, the three people who had signed the so-called agreement on accession to the Russian Federation on behalf of Crimea and the city of Sebastopol were not their legitimate representatives of those places. The person signing for Sebastopol had been "elected" mayor by show of hands and carried a Russian passport.

55. **Ms. Kupradze** (Georgia) said that children residing in the occupied territories of Georgia were deprived of their fundamental right to education in their native language. Their freedom of movement was restricted, and they were not permitted access to the quality free health care provided by the State of Georgia. Those facts were indicative of a larger pattern of harassment and discrimination against Georgians in the occupied territories. In the absence of international monitoring mechanisms, the assertions of a representative of the occupying Power had no credibility whatsoever.

56. The representative of the Russian Federation had recommended talking directly with the authorities of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in previous statements. However, there were only two parties to the conflict: Georgia and the Russian Federation.

57. **Mr. Mikayilli** (Azerbaijan) said that, first, Armenia had also committed barbaric acts, including

the horrific Khojaly massacre, for which even high-ranking Armenian officials had admitted responsibility. The then-President of Armenia had openly claimed to have no regrets about the Azerbaijani civilian casualties. Second, according to Armenian logic, exercise of the right to self-determination required occupying 20 per cent of his country, expelling all Azerbaijanis from the occupied territories, conducting ethnic cleansing and reducing the region to ruins. Third, the agreement reached in St. Petersburg and Vienna should be an integral part of substantive negotiations leading to the withdrawal of Armenian forces from Azerbaijani territories.

58. **Ms. Grigoryan** (Armenia) said that the unfortunate deaths of civilians in Khojaly had been the result of Azerbaijani political intrigue. According to the then-President of Azerbaijan, the attack on Khojaly had not been a surprise, and the Armenians had kept an evacuation corridor open. Civilians had been fired on by armed units loyal to the opposition Azerbaijani Popular Front, as later confirmed by the then-President, who linked their actions to attempts to remove him from power.

59. Regarding the right to self-determination, Azerbaijan itself had recognized the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples among the Basic Principles for the Peaceful Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict, agreed in Madrid.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.